



5th May 2022

Dear Parent, Carer or Guardian,

RE: Welcome to the Summer Term!

I hope this letter finds you well and refreshed after the extended weekend break. It was lovely to have a longer weekend to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and we will, of course, be holding celebrations in school and across our Trust during this half term.

The Spring term concluded with the wonderful school performance of Grease. This was a real 'community' event that brought together our staff, students and their families. As I sat through each of the performances which were all 'sell outs', I could not help but feel incredibly proud of the ambition, drive and resilience our young people demonstrated. They together with staff and family members have been practising for many months, sadly extended due to COVID, but delivered near flawless performances each time. The camaraderie that had been created over those few months was evident to see and it will be important for us and them to keep these new found relationships flourishing. To help to do this and of course to say a huge congratulations our Grease cast and crew will be going on an all-expenses paid trip to watch a 'West End' show!

The months of May and June are usually always busy but this year they are 'jam-packed' with more events than ever before as we continue to 'advantage' our young people out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning beyond the classroom and having the opportunity to take part in different experiences is an integral part of a 'Cantell' education. Last term saw the whole of Year 9 taking part in a fine dining experience at City College. Students were given the opportunity to develop their table etiquette whilst having the opportunity to experience a table service luncheon.

This term we have 28 similar trips and visits planned across the curriculum and beyond.

On Friday 13th of May, we will be holding our first ever 'Culture' day, celebrating the wonderful diversity of our School which is a true reflection of multi-cultural Southampton. The day will provide our community with opportunities to learn more about each other and celebrate our differences and of course what brings us together as a Cantell family. A letter will be coming out this week with more details on how students can play a full and active role in the day. I'm pleased to say many have been involved in the organisation to date and the day is eagerly anticipated to those we have canvassed views from. I hope we will have welcomed a small group of Ukrainian refugees to our school before this time. We are working daily with local agencies to ensure they receive their education with us without delay.

Rewards continue to be an important factor of our school. Over 100,000 house points were awarded last term with over 700 of our students achieving their Bronze House Certificate and 100 students receiving their Silver House Certificate. It is also that time again for me to get my 'serving hat' on as I host all those students that have qualified for a Pizza lunch by being in the Gold CTL group. The



numbers keep increasing as does the pizza but there never seems to be any leftovers for me ... perhaps not a bad thing!

Today saw the launch of annual assessments in Year 7 to 10. I was incredibly proud of the way our Year 7s conducted themselves today, particularly as for some, this might be the first time that they have experienced an exam hall for several years. We have explained to all of our students that these assessments are an important opportunity for them to showcase what they have learned but equally as important to identify for them and for teachers where gaps might exist or where the knowledge is not as secure. We are not and they should not be worried about grades or marks - these assessments are formative not summative and are a guide on what we need to celebrate and where we need to work differently; smarter or harder but most importantly together. Please do spend some time re-iterating this with your young person and also explain the importance of re-visiting topics regularly to ensure the knowledge becomes secure in the long-term memory. Homework continues to be a vital part of this jigsaw puzzle and whilst I am pleased that 70% of young people complete their homework regularly, you will forgive me for wanting to strive for 100%!

The Year 9 options process has run extremely smoothly as we welcomed back students, families and friends to the popular Future Focus event. The team are now working through the various permutations in order to create a timetable that will cater for almost every need. There are a few subjects that are currently oversubscribed, but we will keep you and your young person updated if we need to ask them to make any amendments to their choices before finally confirming KS4 options in early June - how exciting!

This term sees the launch of our 'co-curricular programme for all.' Further to Mr Wilson's letter last term, it is our expectation that with lighter evenings that every student at Cantell in Years 7-10 take part in at least one club until the end of the summer term. These clubs are, first and foremost fun, but also help develop our student's Empower skills which are crucial for modern day life and in the workplace. Our view was confirmed recently when a group of students and I met Jen Tippin, Chief People and Transformation Officer for Natwest, who looks after a staff of over 60,000 employees globally. She was very clear that at Natwest and in many of their client and partner organisations it is what you do outside of the academic arena and the skills that you develop that counts a great deal.

We are offering 62 co-curricular clubs each week and continue to offer transport options home if required. Please do sit down with your young person and discuss this with them. There will be, of course, some students that already have a rich and vibrant experience of clubs outside of school and may not have time to dedicate to a school club. If this is the case, please do ask them to discuss this with either their Lesson A teacher or Gmail Mr Wilson directly.

It was an absolute pleasure to speak with Year 11 today in their first face to face assembly since the pandemic began. I reminded them of the very first assembly I gave them when they were on transition week and in Year 6 and we spoke about the exciting journey that was and still is very much in front of them. This Year 11 have been an absolute delight and of course have been through so much disruption. We are, however, very confident on their behalf because they have demonstrated exceptional resilience and commitment to their studies over the course of their GCSEs and are making strong progress with the final preparations for the exams. On Friday 13th of May, the Year 11 'alternative timetable' kicks off with RE and Computer Science masterclasses in advance of the first GCSE exams on Monday 16th of May (although some students will have already sat some languages exams). Our final celebrations will take place on Thursday 23rd of June, when we hold our final Year 11 assembly and Friday 24th of June, when we hold the Year 11 Prom. We know that this can be a stressful period for our students and we are working with them to help them find the right balance between revision and relaxation. If you are at all concerned about well-being during this busy period, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Evans or



Mr Gill who will talk through any additional support we can put in place. Good luck Year 11 - "oh the places you will go!"

Finally, it was lovely to meet our new Year 7 students and their families for our first face to face Coffee and Cake evening for the last couple of years. The hall was packed as Mrs Hartley and Mr Clark went through some of the things young people can expect when they join us in September. The transition team are currently in the process of visiting Primary schools to get as much info on each individual student as we can and busily preparing for the return of our highly successful face to face transition week! A huge congratulations to the 250 students who will join us in September. In total we had nearly 600 applications with the majority of these being first choices. We do not take our position or our roles for granted and will continue to do all we can to help our young people make friends and memories for a lifetime.

As always, if there is any aspect of your young person`s education you wish to discuss with me, please do not hesitate to email headspa@cantell.co.uk

Warmest Regards,



Harry Kutty
Headteacher of Cantell and Leader of the Aspire Community Trust.